



## Hermitage House Youth Services

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GROUP HOMES

INDEPENDENT LIVING

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EMERGENCY SHELTER

RECEIVED

AUG 25 1997

JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT  
COUNTY COURTHOUSE ERIE, PA.

Progress Report  
RE: James Tice  
Group Home  
June - August 15, 1997

### INTRODUCTION:

James Tice is an 18 year old delinquent who has been at Hermitage House since late February of 1997. Jim's Probation Officer remains Dianne Dabrowski from Erie County Probation Office. On 8/15, Jim reviewed his Individual Service Plan (ISP) with his Probation Officer and the unit's Assistant Supervisor in attendance. Jim expected his sister Karen to attend but she was unable to. Her absence set a negative tone for Jim because it made it difficult for Jim to present his plan to be discharged to Karen's care. After lengthy discussion, Jim's ISP goals were amended somewhat but still maintained the same general context.

Over the past 2-1/2 months, Jim's attitude has fluctuated quite a bit. Because of this, his status on the Privilege Ladder has also varied. He has gone from a high point of 3.5 in mid-June to a low of 1.5 which is his current level. He has maintained the privileges of being off staff sight and attending off-ground activities and his allowance has gone up and down based on his current level.

Jim, with time and continued persuasion from staff, has addressed several of his goals. Visitation with Jim's older sisters continues to be very therapeutic for him. He also continues to enjoy participating in the Horse Program. Also, the most recent report of earning a high mark at Erie County Vo-Tech and obtaining part-time employment has helped Jim stay focused on what he considers important.

During this report period, Jim continued to struggle with addressing many other goals in his ISP. At this time, Jim continues to be defiant towards staff and attempts to overwhelm his peers. Jim has lacked consistency in following through on other objectives such as working towards his GED and maintaining structure.

### GOAL: INDEPENDENCE

Objective: I will attend and participate in independent living (IL) groups.

The independent living groups are in recess for the summer. They are due to begin this fall and Jim will attend them at that time.

EXHIBIT VV

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Objective: I will work towards Supervised Independent Living (SIL).

Jim continues to struggle with obtaining level 5.0 in order to move to our on-grounds Independent Living Program. The highest level achieved for this reporting period was level 3.5. He has stated on several occasions that he is no longer interested in SIL. Jim's behavior has indicated that his desire to remain in the unit is valid. He has expressed little regret or concern over his inability to move to SIL. Jim has become obsessed with the idea of moving in with his sister Karen instead.

GOAL: EDUCATION/TRAINING

Objective: I will obtain my GED.

Jim has shown little ambition to retake the GED test. It was explained to Jim that the GED test could be taken in smaller sections over a period of time. Jim has no interest at this time. This was a difficult point at Jim's most recent ISP. Eventually, Jim agreed that he would try to do specific sections of the GED.

Objective: I will pursue training options in mechanics or electronics.

Jim has attended a Basic Industrial Electronics course at Erie County Vo-Tech. Supervisor of Adult Education Dr. Timothy Wise, Ph.D., has reported that Jim's attendance has been perfect and his classroom and laboratory performance has been exemplary. Jim's final grade in the course was a B-. He has already registered to take Residential Wiring in the fall.

GOAL: FAMILY

Objective: I will maintain contact with Judy and Karen.

Jim has maintained contact with both of his siblings, Judy Tice and Karen Jaworski. The contact has been by phone and a few off-ground overnight visits. Jim visited with his sister Judy Tice on June 6th-8th. He visited his sister Karen Jaworski on June 13-15th and July 25-27th. He also visited Judy on August 9-11. The visits, overall, have gone well. On the last of these visits, Jim and Karen had a disagreement over the issue of his supervision. Karen reported that Jim left with her boyfriend to work. Karen also stated that Jim failed to gain her permission which led to the disagreement between them. Jim was reminded upon his return that he will need to have his sister grant permission to him when going to work with her boyfriend. While on these visits, Jim has helped around the home doing small repair jobs and some general maintenance. He also assisted Judy in cutting and hauling wood.

Jim still has the outlook that he will soon be released into the custody of one or the other of his older siblings. Jim's

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visitation will continue at this time but Jim and his sister have been reminded that Jim must remain in his sister's supervision at all times. One other concern was that Jim reported that his mother was at Judy's house on the last visit. According to Jim, she was there while he was out gathering wood. This event did stir up old feelings in Jim, particularly resentment about him being in placement.

GOAL: PERSONAL

Objective: I won't feed into negativity (don't join in with others' negativity, hold peers accountable, help out with chores).

During the majority of this reporting period, Jim demonstrated that keeping himself accountable remained very difficult for him. Jim also had difficulty in controlling his comments which on several occasions were disrespectful or threatening to many staff members. Jim also broke confidentiality concerning another client's reason or reasons for placement. Jim also became very disrespectful to staff when consequence for his behavior. Some behaviors displayed were to make several threats such as "slapping or hitting staff".

Jim's lack of respect to authority was prevalent throughout much of this reporting period. Jim would become mostly verbally hostile toward staff over receiving restrictions for not following the structure. On one occasion, Jim was asked to return the unit dictionary. Jim refused to do so and upon a staff entering his room, Jim threatened them by saying "You better not go into my room or I'll kill you." During a ride to Vo-Tech school, Jim and the staff member taking him stopped at a convenience store in order for Jim to purchase cigarettes. Jim was unable to purchase cigarettes due to inability to show proof of legal age. Jim demanded of the staff to purchase the cigarettes for him. When this staff refused, Jim became explosively angry. Jim displayed this by banging his personal tool kit and belongings inside the van. Jim also had an incident of smoking from his bedroom and yelling and spitting from the second story window after removing the screen without staff permission.

It should be noted that Jim has now become more passive when dealing with consequences. Jim's biggest way to avoid any form of responsibility is to request sick room for the day. This has become a once or twice weekly event for Jim. It is evident by Jim's lack of commitment and his poor outlook toward his goals, that he is awaiting the possibility of being released into the custody of his sister.

Jim was helpful in repairing several fans in the unit and he spent several hours in sanding and resurfacing the large dining room table. Jim also enjoys working on the lawnmowers but is carefully monitored when doing so.

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When Jim keeps himself busy or involved, he avoids many problems but when directed by authority such as staff to follow the structure or activity, Jim usually responds in a negative way. When Jim chooses to think about his actions before acting on them, he usually complies and does well.

Objective: I will be a role model for other clients (structure/treatment).

Jim has demonstrated he can provide a very positive role model for several younger clients. Jim usually is the first client to help new arriving clients become familiar with the routine and structure of our program. Jim also displays a very positive model when the task or subject is of major interest to himself. Staff and his primary counselor continue to stress to Jim to remain positive at all times. On the other hand, there are many times when Jim is the leader in negative behaviors.

Objective: I will respect staff and their concerns for me.

While Jim is addressing this objective, he has shown the ability to respect staff but often chooses not to. Jim continues to argue with staff or make inappropriate comments. Jim also looks to obtain the highest ranking staff member for the final decision of any dispute.

Objective: I will stop swearing.

Jim continues to swear in his daily language. He has received fines and redirection for this but has made little effort to improve his language. Staff will continue to stress to Jim that mature adults do not swear on a regular basis.

Objective: I will follow the unit structure and earn my points; be responsible.

Most areas of structure are good for Jim but there are some weaknesses. Jim continues to rush through his daily chores. Jim's choice not to follow the bed time policies has also been difficult for him. Jim usually loses points at bed time for failure to be in room at a given time or talking after lights are out.

Objective: I will use my anger management skills (take time-outs).

Jim has displayed little appropriate use of time-outs. He does use time-outs but often in inappropriate ways. When he is angry, he will walk out of the house without permission or stay in his room for long periods of time. Both of these methods eventually diffuse his anger but they are essentially escapes rather than efforts to deal with a problem.

GOAL: EMPLOYMENT

Objective: I will secure a part-time position.

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Jim secured part-time employment at our on-grounds JTPA Summer Work Program. Jim worked this program only 1/2 a day before quitting. Jim currently is employed by Quality Building Services which is a janitorial service. Jim cleans an area department store (Ames). Jim has continued to stress his desire to be employed by his sister's boyfriend who does construction and odd jobs.

OTHER:

Jim had no medical appointments during this reporting time.

Jim's weekly coping skills group was run by Assistant Unit Supervisor Mark Johnson. It was reported that Jim has participated in coping skills group on a weekly basis. The group has spent time discussing the topic "Drugs and Risks". They have discussed reasons people do drugs, the effects of various drugs, drug classification, emerging issues, and ways to avoid peer pressure. Jim generally has acceptable participation in these groups but there have been times when he has strayed from the topic. His attitude has always been acceptable.

Jim has also attended several in-unit group discussion on fire safety, how to improve the unit positively, coming together as a unit, discussion of upcoming major events, what it is like to have a learning disability, and the meaning of Independence Day. Jim's behavior during the groups he attended has been good. It should be noted that Jim has missed several group discussions due to his obligation to attend Vo-Tech training two times weekly.

Jim enjoys playing basketball, softball, fishing, movies, riding bikes, and playing board games. Jim's favorite on-grounds activity is working on small motors or repairs on small electronics (radios, VCR's, etc.). Jim also has attended special group outings to Waldemeer Park, Pirates baseball, Erie Seawolves baseball, Carnegie Museum, and 4th of July Fireworks at Mercyhurst College. Jim's behavior during these special outings was generally acceptable.

When Jim becomes involved with special projects, he generally behaves well and is a positive influence. Staff continue to encourage Jim to complete the structure and address treatment so he can enjoy more free time to invest in these hobbies.

In addition to Jim's other activities, he is still an active participant in the Horse Program. He cleans stalls and feeds the horses weekly and earns riding time based on his performance of these duties. He enjoys this opportunity and has been consistent in his efforts with it.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION:

Jim continues to do fairly well in several areas. He has gotten and maintained a part-time job. He has completed one course



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in electrical wiring at the Erie County Vo-Tech. He also has done fairly well on activities and has been trustworthy and appropriate in public places.

There have been many occasions when Jim has appeared to be unmotivated and has made little effort to work on some of his ISP goals. Particularly lacking has been his motivation to move to SIL. He is aware that this is a major component of his treatment and has been encouraged to refocus his efforts in this direction.

Respectfully submitted,



Dale Wellman  
Unit Counselor



Mark Johnson  
Unit Assistant Supervisor



Pamela Marsh-Overholt  
Assistant Director